British Islands) states that *E. lichenea* was "apparently very rare in south-east England, and scarce in Sussex". With the first Kent record being as late as 1875, for Folkestone, it seems that the comparatively late colonisation of the Kent coast has not ended, and today is continuing, including westwards up the Thames estuary.– B.K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent DA5 2HN.

Lampropteryx suffumata D.&S. (Lep.: Geometridae) in February

I was very surprised to take a specimen of the Water Carpet *Lampropteryx suffumata* in my m.v. trap here on 24 February 1988, since the species usually appears here in mid-April, my earliest previous record being for 1 April 1997. Although I have found references to emergences as late as July, I have seen no mention of March or February. The night of 24 February was, significantly, mild, with five other species putting in first appearances for the year. It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that at least two possible foodplants were in evidence here at that early time.– ALASDAIR ASTON, Wake's Cottage, 1 The Street, Selborne, Hampshire GU34 3JH.

Recent records of *Fedalmia headleyella* (Staint.) (Lep.: Nepticulidae) in Wiltshire

On 22 September 1996 my brother and I visited the Imber Ranges (VC8) on Salisbury Plain for a spell of general recording and collecting. Whilst investigating a section of broken ground on a west-facing escarpment at grid ref. ST9349 we noted a very compact cluster of *Prunella vulgaris* seedlings. It was immediately obvious that one of the leaves was purple in colour and closer inspection revealed that it was mined. As we had not previously encountered *F. headleyella* we tentatively assumed this was the species concerned. An investment of about one hour in searching revealed no other mines.

On the following weekend, 29 September, I was able once more to gain access to these Ranges and at ST9348 I found another tenanted plant. More searching at this site proved futile.

From these two tenanted plants we were very pleased to breed out, on 5 June 1997, two female *F. headleyella*.

On 20 September 1997 at ST9046 we found another tenanted plant and again further searching was in vain.

Whilst in correspondence with Mr Stephen Palmer concerning his work on the compilation of a list of the Wiltshire microlepidoptera the above-mentioned discoveries prompted me to enquire as to the previously known records of *F. headleyella* with the county. There appears to be only two known records (and I quote the data in full as supplied by Stephen) "Thrup Wood (VC7) 1 July 1877, from the Marlborough College List", and the second, "From A.M. Emmet (*pers. comm.*). A VC8 record in 1977 from Mr S.C. Scarsdale-Brown (location unknown)."

Evidently *F. headleyella* has long been established in Wiltshire and probably substantially under-recorded. The map references I quoted above indicate a satisfactory distribution on the Imber Ranges and as these are the only locations which my brother and I have searched for *F. headleyella* and considering that *P. vulgaris* is a common enough plant I think it not unreasonable to assume that this

moth is probably widespread although our experience as of the moment suggests it may be at low density.

I would like to thank Stephen for the supply of data and I am certain if any reader has background information concerning the record by Mr S.C. Scarsdale-Brown details would be very much appreciated by all concerned.– M.H. SMITH, 42 Bellefield Crescent, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8SR.

Flies and wasps at an Insect-o-cutor

In 1994 Mark Parsons presented me with a pot of material from an Insect-o-cutor inside stables at Richmond Park. From this material I extracted the hoverflies, larger Brachycera, selected Scathophagidae, and aculeate Hymenoptera which yielded 231 specimens, the bulk of which were *Eristalis tenax,* a species whose larvae develop in organically rich water and which must have been visiting the stables as a breeding site. The second most frequent species was *Syritta pipiens,* which is associated with decaying vegetation and which may also have been breeding within the stables. Other species recorded occurred at such low levels that they are likely to have been incidental captures rather than species directly attracted to the stables, especially as many are mainly represented by males. The overall species list comprised:

Diptera

Syrphidae
Eristalis tenax (14♂, 182♀); *E. pertinax* (1♀); *Myathropa florea* (1♀); *Syritta pipiens* (6♂, 10♀).

Stratiomyidae
Beris chalybata (4♂); *Chloromyia formosa* (1♂); *Pachygaster atra* (1♀).

Asilidae
Dioctria baumhaueri (3♂, 1♀)

Scathophagidae
Cordilura albipes (3♂)

Hymenoptera

Vespidae
Vespula germanica (1♀)

Sphecidae
Crossocerus quadrimaculatus (2♀)

Chrysididae
Cleptes semiauratus (1♀)

Insect-o-cutors clearly offer an opportunity to secure records of species that might otherwise be rarely met with, as is demonstrated by the record of *Cleptes semiaurata,* a species which I have seen on barely a handful of occasions. It would be interesting to see what occurs in other Insect-o-cutors, especially in the London area where *Volucella zonaria* is plentiful and has a habit of entering buildings.– R.K.A. MORRIS, c/o 241 Commonside East, Mitcham, Surrey.